

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8123

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMCONSUL MUNICH

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, CGEN, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET HARD CURRENCY COUPONS

REF: (A) STATE 299593; (B) MOSCOW 18102; (C) MOSCOW 9273;
(D) MOSCOW 17449

1. EMBASSY WAS CONTACTED BY INYURKOLLEGIA REPRESENTATIVE OBIDEN DECEMBER 23 WHO STATED HE WAS CALLING QTE ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM AND WITH COMPLETE AUTHORITY OF UNQTE INYURKOLLEGIA PRESIDENT KOROBOV IN EFFORT CLARIFY SITUATION WITH REGARD SETTLEMENT OF ESTATE CASES AFTER JANUARY 1. OBIDEN CONFIRMED THAT SOVIETS HAD RECEIVED DIRECT QUERY FROM CORRESPONDENT US LAW FIRM ABOUT SITUATION.

2. ACCORDING TO OBIDEN, RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS FROM ABROAD UNDER ANY OF THE EIGHT CATEGORIES SPECIFIED IN THE DECREE (REFTEL C) OR OTHER CATEGORIES WHICH MIGHT BE AUTHORIZED BY THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE IN THE FUTURE WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE OPTION OF OPENING HARD CURRENCY B ACCOUNTS AT THE FOREIGN TRADE BANK. THE ONLY DEDUCTIONS FROM THE REMITTANCES WILL BE THE INYURKOLLEGIA FEES OF 5-10 PERCENT. OBIDEN STATED THAT CERTIFICATES WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR PUR-
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CHASE OF VNESHPOSYLTORG GOODS, QTE SUCH AS ZAPOROZHETS

CARS UNQTE, AS HAS BEEN THE CASE IN THE PAST. EMBOFF INFORMED OBIDEN THAT INFORMATION PREVIOUSLY PROVIDED BY INYURKOLLEGIA HAD BEEN ACCURATELY REPORTED (REFTEL D) BUT THAT SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER SOVIET ORGANIZATIONS HAD INTRODUCED SOME CONFLICTING POINTS. EMBOFF REFERRED TO EMBASSY'S NOVEMBER 11 REQUEST TO MFA FOR EXPLANATION OF NEW REGULATIONS AND SAID IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF SOVIETS COULD PROVIDE COMPLETE, DETAILED REPLY.

3. EMBOFF WAS UNABLE TO CONTACT MR. KONONOVSKY AT VNESHPOSYLTORG, BUT OFFICIAL IN HIS DEPARTMENT SAID THAT ANOTHER SECTION OF VNESHPOSYLTORG WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR HARD CURRENCY CERTIFICATE OPERATIONS AFTER JANUARY 1. EMBOFF WAS ASKED TO REFER OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT DETAILS TO MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

4. COMMENT - APPARENTLY THERE IS A CERTAIN LACK OF CLARITY WITHIN THE SOVIET BUREAUCRACY ITSELF WITH REGARD TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW REGULATIONS. MFA REPLY TO OUR LETTER OF NOVEMBER 11 (REFTEL B) DID NOT ADDRESS THE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS POSED. IN ABSENCE OF SATISFACTORY OFFICIAL SOVIET EXPLANATION EMBASSY ASSUMES THAT INYURKOLLEGIA INFORMATION IS ACCURATE AND THAT SOME PROCEDURE WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR ESTATE CASES TO BE SETTLED WITHOUT LOSS OF VALUE. FOR EXAMPLE, ACCORDING TO SIGN POSTED AT THE DIPLOMATIC GASTRONOME (BOLSHAYA GRUZINSKAYA 63) CERTIFICATES WILL NO LONGER BE ACCEPTED FOR FOOD PRODUCTS AFTER FIRST OF YEAR. EMBOFF ASKED IF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND TOBACCO PRODUCTS WERE INCLUDED IN THIS CATEGORY AND ANSWER WAS AFFIRMATIVE. PLANNED CHANGES IN FOREIGN CURRENCY STORE OPERATIONS IN VILNIUS AFTER JANUARY 1 WILL BE REPORTED BY SEPTEL.
STOESSEL

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